A SERMON

On the PRESENT SITUATION of AMERICAN AFFAIRS.

Preached in CHRIST-CHURCH, June 23, 1775.

At the Requeſt of the Officers of the Third Battallion of the City of *Philadelphia*, and Diſtrict of *Southwark*.

By WILLIAM SMITH. D. D.
Provost of the College in that City.

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Signed by Order,

JOHN CADWALADER, Colonel.

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PREFACE.

THE following Sermon was drawn up on a few days notice, and without any view to the press, at the request of some of the Author's worthy Friends, to whom he could refuse nothing of this kind. At their request it is now likewise submitted to the Public, as it was preached, without varying or supplying a single sentiment or material expression; and with the addition only of a few lines, and three or four explanatory notes.

THE Author considered that, although he was called to this office by a particular body, yet he was to address a great and mixt assembly of his fellow-citizens, and a number of the high characters in America, now met in consultation, at a most alarming crisis for the natural interests of Great-Britain

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ANIMATED with the pureſt zeal for the mutual intereſts of Great-Britain

tain and the Colonies; ardently panting for the return of thoſe Halcyon-days of harmony, during which both countries ſo long flouriſhed together, as the glory and wonder of the world; he thought it his duty, with the utmoſt impartiality, to attempt a ſtate of the unhappy controverſy that now rends the empire in pieces; and to ſhew, if peradventure he might be permitted to vouch for his fellow citizens, ſo far as he has been converſant among them, that the idea of an independence upon the Parent-country, or the leaſt licentious oppoſition to its juſt intereſts, is utterly foreign to their thoughts; that they contend only for the ſanctity of charters and laws, together with the right of granting their own money; and that our rightful Sovereign has no where more loyal ſubjects, or more zealouſly attached to thoſe principles of government

ment, under which his family inherits the Throne.

THESE, with a few things which ſeemed neceſſary reſpecting the church at this time, are the topics handled in the following Sermon. If the principles it contains are but thoroughly *felt*, the Reader will not regret that the limits of a ſingle diſcourſe would not allow a particular application of them. They will lead to their own application; or, at leaſt, that field is left open to ſucceeding Preachers.

UPON the whole, if the kind expectations of the Author's Friends can be in any degree anſwered; if what he has delivered ſhall tend "to promote the *Cauſe of Liberty and Virtue*;" and particularly, if it could find its way to the cloſets, or rather to the hearts, of the *Great*, and (after all the arguments they have heard from others) could in the leaſt induce them to

juſter

juſter and more benevolent ſentiments concerning their American brethren—he would account it among the happieſt circumſtances of his life.

ENOUGH has ſurely been attempted, by way of experiment, to be convinced that the people of this country know their rights, and will not conſent to a *paſſive* ſurrender of them—It is, now at leaſt, time to purſue another mode, and to liſten to ſome plan for averting the dreadful calamities which muſt attend a hoſtile proſecution of this unnatural conteſt. The author's wiſhes for the accompliſhment of ſuch a plan, have been ſo frequently expreſſed as to ſubject him perhaps to ſuſpicions which he would not wiſh to merit, either here or elſe where. But ſtill, if he could ſee it take place, upon a juſt and permanent foundation, he would be content, if it were required, to ſing his "*nunc dimittis*," and to take a final leave of earthly concerns.

SERMON, &c.

JOSHUA xxii. 22.

The Lord God of Gods—the Lord God of Gods —He knoweth, and Iſrael he ſhall know—if it be in Rebellion, or in Tranſgreſſion againſt the Lord—Save us not this Day.

THESE Words, my Brethren, will lead us into a train of reflections, wholly ſuitable to the deſign of our preſent meeting; and I muſt beg your indulgence till I explain, as briefly as poſſible, the ſolemn occaſion on which they were firſt delivered; hoping the application, I may afterwards make of them, may fully reward your attention.

THE two tribes of Reuben and of Gad, and the half tribe of Manaſſeh, had choſen their inheritance, on the Eaſtern ſide of Jordan, oppoſite to the other tribes of Iſrael. And although they knew that this ſituation would deprive them of ſome privileges which remained with their brethren on the other ſide, and particularly that great privilege of having the place of the Altar and Tabernacle of God among them; yet, as the land of Canaan was judged too ſmall for all the twelve tribes, they were contented with the poſſeſſion they had choſen. And thus they ſpoke to Moſes—

" IT is a land of cattle, and thy ſervants
" have much cattle. Wherefore, if we have
" found grace in thy ſight, let this land be
" given to us for a poſſeſſion, and we will
" build ſheepfolds here for our cattle, and
" cities for our *little ones;* and we ourſelves
" will go ready armed before our brethren,
" the children of Iſrael,—and will not return
" into our houſes, until they have inherited
" every man his inheritance."—

" AND Moſes ſaid unto them—If you
" will do this thing, and will go all of you

armed

" *armed* over Jordan before the Lord, un-
" til he have driven out his enemies from
" before him; and the land (of Canaan)
" be ſubdued (for your brethren); then af-
" terwards ye ſhall return, and this land (of
" Gilead) ſhall be your poſſeſſion before
" the Lord"*

THIS, then, was the great *original contract*, under which theſe two tribes and a half were allowed to ſeparate from the reſt, and to dwell on the other ſide of Jordan. They were to aſſiſt their brethren in their neceſſary wars, and to continue under *one Government* with them—even that of the great Jehovah himſelf—erecting no ſeparate altar, but coming to perform their ſacrifices at that *one Altar* of SHILOH, where the Lord had vouchſafed to promiſe his ſpecial preſence.

THOUGH this ſubjected them to inconveniencies, yet as Uniformity of Worſhip and the Nature of their *Theocracy* required it, they adhered faithfully to their contract.

IN

* Numb. 32.

In the fear of God, they bowed themſelves at his altar, although not placed in their own land; and, in love to their brethren, they ſupported them in their wars, "till there ſtood not a man of all their ene-"mies before them;" and at laſt, Joshua, their great leader, having no farther need of their aſſiſtance, gave them this noble teſtimony—That they had in all things obey'd his voice as their general, and faithfully performed all that they had promiſed to Moſes the ſervant of God. Wherefore, he bleſſed them, and diſmiſſed them to return to their own land "with much riches, and with cat-"tle, and with ſilver, and with gold, and "with much raiment."

No ſooner, therefore, had they entered their own country, than in the fullneſs of gratitude, on the banks of Jordan, at the common paſſage, over againſt Canaan, they built an *high* or *great Altar*, that it might remain an eternal monument of their being of one ſtock, and entitled to the ſame civil and religious privileges, with their brethren of the other tribes.

But their work of piety and love was directly misconstrued. The cry was immediately raised against them. The zealots of that day scrupled not to declare them *Rebels* against the living God, violators of his sacred laws and *Theocracy*, in setting up an altar against his holy altar; and therefore the whole congregations of the brother-tribes, that dwelt in Canaan, gathered themselves together, to go up to war against their own flesh and blood; in a blind transport of unrighteous zeal, purposing to extirpate them from the face of the earth, as enemies to God and the common wealth of Israel.

In that awful and important moment (and oh my God that the example could be copied among the brother-tribes of our Israel, in the Parent Land) I say, in that awful and important moment, some milder and more benevolent men there were, whose zeal did not so far transport them, but that, before they unsheath'd the sword to plunge it with unhallowed hand into the bowels of their brethren, they thought it justice first to enquire into the truth of the charge against them. And, for the glory of Israel, this peaceable and prudent council prevailed.

A most

A MOST ſolemn embaſſy was prepared, at the head of which was a man of ſacred character, and venerable authority, breathing the dictates of religion and humanity; PHINEHAS the ſon of Eleazer the high Prieſt, acompanied with ten other Chiefs or Princes, one from each of the nine tribes as well as from the remaining half tribe of Manaſſeh.

GREAT was the aſtoniſhment of the *Gileadites on receiving this embaſſy, and hearing the charge againſt them. But the power of conſcious innocence is above all fear, and the language of an upright heart ſuperior to all eloquence. By a ſolemn appeal to Heaven for the rectitude of their intentions, unpremeditated and vehement. in the words of my text, they diſarmed their brethren of every ſuſpicion.

" THE Lord God of Gods," ſay they (in the fervency of truth, repeating the invocation) " the Lord God of Gods"—He that made the heavens and the earth, who ſearcheth the

* The two tribes and a half are here briefly and generally denominated *Gileadites*, from the name of the land they had choſen.

the hearts, and is acquainted with the moſt ſecret thoughts, of all men—" He knoweth, and all Iſrael ſhall know," by our unſhaken conſtancy in the religion of our fathers—that this charge againſt us is utterly falſe.

THEN turning from their brethren, with unſpeakable dignity of ſoul and clearneſs of conſcience, they addreſs the almighty Jehovah himſelf—

OH thou ſovereign Ruler of the univerſe—our God and our Fathers God—" if it be in " Rebellion or in tranſgreſſion againſt thee," that we have raiſed this monument of our zeal for the commonwealth of Iſrael—"SAVE " US NOT THIS DAY!" If the moſt diſtant thought has entered our hearts of erecting an *independent altar;* if we have ſought, in one inſtance, to derogate from the glory of that ſacred Altar which thou haſt placed among our brethren beyond Jordan, as the common bond of union and worſhip among all the tribes of Iſrael—let not this day's ſun deſcend upon us, till thou haſt made us a monument of thine avengeing juſtice, in the ſight of the ſurrounding world!

AFTER

After this aſtoniſhing appeal to the great God of Heaven and Earth, they proceed to reaſon with their brethren; and tell them that, ſo far from intending a ſeparation either in government or religion, this altar was built with a direct contrary purpoſe—"That it "might be a Witness between us and you, "and our generations after us; that your "children may not ſay to our children in "time to come, ye have no part in the "Lord." We were afraid leſt in ſome future age, when our poſterity may croſs Jordan to offer ſacrifices in the place appointed, your poſterity may thruſt them from the altar, and tell them that becauſe they live not in the land where the Lord's tabernacle dwelleth, they are none of his people, nor intitled to the Jewiſh privileges.

But while this altar ſtands, they ſhall always have an anſwer ready. They will be able to ſay—"Behold the pattern of the al-"tar of the Lord which our fathers made." If our fathers had not been of the ſeed of Iſrael, they would not have fondly copied your cuſtoms and models. You would not have beheld in *Gilead*, an altar, in all things an imitation

imitation of the true altar of God, which is in Shiloh; except only that ours is an high "or great altar to ſee" from far. And this may convince you that it was not intended as an altar of ſacrifice (for then it would have been but three cubits in height, as our law directs) but as a monumental altar, to inſtruct our generations for ever, that they are of the ſame pedigree with yourſelves, and entitled to the ſame civil and religious privileges.

THIS noble defence wrought an immediate reconciliation among the diſcordant tribes. "The words, (when reported) "pleaſed the children of Iſrael—they bleſſ-"ed God together" for preventing the effuſion of kindred blood, "and did not go "up to deſtroy the land where their bre-"thren, the children of Reuben† and Gad, "dwelt."

THE whole Hiſtory of the Bible cannot furniſh a paſſage more inſtructive than this, to the members of a great empire, whoſe dreadful misfortune it is to have the evil De-

† Though for brevity, the ſacred text, in this and other places, only mentions *Reuben* and *Gad*, yet the half tribe of *Manaſſeh* is alſo ſuppoſed to be included.

mon of civil or religious *diſcord* gone forth among them. And would to God, that the application I am now to make of it could be delivered in accents louder than Thunder, till they have pierced the ear of every Briton; and eſpecially their ears who have meditated war and deſtruction againſt their brother-tribes of Reuben and Gad, in this our *American Gilead*. And let me add—would to God too that we, who this day conſider ourſelves in the place of thoſe tribes, may, like them, be ſtill able to lay our hands on our hearts in a ſolemn appeal to the God of Gods, for the rectitude of our intentions towards the *whole* common wealth of our BRITISH ISRAEL. For, call'd to this ſacred place, on this great occaſion, I know it is your wiſh that I ſhould ſtand ſuperior to all *partial motives*, and be found alike unbiaſs'd by favor or by fear. And happy it is that the parallel, now to be drawn, requires not the leaſt ſacrifice either of truth or virtue?

LIKE the tribes of Reuben and Gad, we have choſen our inheritance, in a land ſeparated from that of our fathers and brethren, not indeed by a ſmall River, but an immenſe Ocean. This inheritance we likewiſe hold by a

by a plain *original contract*, entitling us to all the natural and improveable advantages of our ſituation, and to a community of privileges with our brethren, in every civil and religious reſpect; except in this, that the throne or ſeat of Empire, that great altar at which the men of this world bow, was to remain among them.

REGARDLESS of this local inconvenience, uncanker'd by jealouſy, un-depreſs'd by fear, and cemented by mutual love and mutual benefits, we trod the path of glory with our brethren for an hundred years and more—enjoying a length of felicity ſcarce ever experienced by any other people. Mindful of the hands that protected us in our youth and ſubmitting to every juſt regulation for appropriating to them the benefit of our trade—our wealth was poured in upon them from ten thouſand channels, widening as they flowed, and making their poor to ſing, and induſtry to ſmile, through every corner of their land. And as often as dangers threaten'd, and the voice of the Britiſh Iſrael called our brethren to the field, we left them not alone, but ſhared their toils, and fought by their ſide, "till

" there ſtood not a man of all their enemies " before them." Nay, they themſelves teſtified on our behalf, that in all things we not only did our part, but more than our part for the common Good, and they diſmiſs'd us home loaded with ſilver and with gold, * in recompence for our extraordinary ſervices.

So far you ſee the parallel holds good. But what *high altars* have we built to alarm our Britiſh Iſrael; and why have the congregations of our brethren gathered themſelves together againſt us? why do their embattled hoſts already cover our plains? will they not examine our caſe, and liſten to our plea?

" THE Lord God of Gods—he knows" and the whole ſurrounding world ſhall yet know, that whatever *American altars* we have built, far from intending to diſhonour, have been raiſed with an expreſs view to perpetuate the name and glory of that ſacred altar, and ſeat of empire and liberty, which we left behind us, and wiſh to remain eternal, among our brethren, in the parent land!

ESTEEMING

* The parliamentary reimburſements for our exertions in the late war; ſimilar to what Joſhua gave the two tribes and a half on the cloſe of his wars.

ESTEEMING our relation to them our greateſt felicity; adoring the providence that gave us the ſame progenitors; glorying in this, that when the *new-world* was to be portioned out among the kingdoms of the *old*, the moſt important part of this continent fell to the ſons of a proteſtant and free nation; deſirous of worſhiping for ever at the ſame altar with them; fond of their manners, even to exceſs; enthuſiaſts to that ſacred plan of civil and religious happineſs, for the preſervation of which they have ſacrificed from age to age; maintaining, and always ready to maintain, at the riſque of every thing that is dear to us, the moſt unſhaken fidelity to our common Sovereign, as the great center of our union, and guardian of our mutual rights;—I ſay, with theſe principles and theſe views, we thought it our duty, to build up American altars, or *conſtitutions*, as nearly as we could, upon the great Britiſh model.

HAVING never ſold our birth-right, we conſidered ourſelves entitled to the privileges of our father's houſe—"to enjoy peace, liberty and ſafety"; to be governed, like our brethren, by our own laws, in all matters properly

properly affecting ourſelves, and to offer up our own ſacrifices at the altar of Britiſh empire; contending that a forced devotion is idolatry, and that no power on earth has a right to come in between us and a gracious ſovereign, to meaſure forth our loyalty, or to grant our property, *without our conſent.*

THESE are the principles we inherited from Britons themſelves. Could we depart from them, we ſhould be deemed baſtards and not ſons, aliens and not brethren.

THE altars therefore which we have built, are not * high or rival altars to create jealouſy, but humble monuments of our union and love; intended to bring millions yet unborn, from every corner of this vaſt continent, to bend at the great parent-altar of Britiſh liberty; venerating

* In this reſpect, our plea is even ſtronger than that of the two tribes and a half. For, till an explanation was given, the *height* of their altar, like thoſe of the heathen, who loved to ſacrifice on lofty places, might create a ſuſpicion of their "lapſing "into idolatry; either intending to worſhip other "Gods, or the God of Iſrael in an unlawful place "and manner." Bp. PATRICK.

nerating the country from which they ſprung, and pouring their gifts into her lap when their countleſs thouſands ſhall far exceed hers.

It was our wiſh that there ſhould be an eternal "Witneſs between our brethren and us; that if at any future period, amid the ſhifting ſcenes of human intereſts and human affections, their children ſhould ſay to our children—"Ye have no portion" in the birth-right of Britons, and ſo ſeek to puſh them from the common ſhrine of Freedom, when they come to pay their homage there; they might always have an anſwer ready—"Behold the pattern of the altar which our Fathers built," Behold your own religious and civil inſtitutions, and then examine the frames of government and ſyſtems of laws raiſed by our fathers in every part of America! Could theſe have been ſuch exact copies of your own, if they had not inherited the ſame ſpirit, and ſprung from the ſame ſtock, with yourſelves.

Thus far you ſee the parallel yet holds good, and I think cannot be called a perverſion of my text; if you will allow that the ſupreme

power

power of an empire, whether theocratical, monarchical, or howſoever diſtributed, may be repreſented under the figure of *one* common *altar*, at which the juſt devotion of all the ſubjects is to be paid.

But it is ſaid that we have of late departed from our former line of duty, and *refuſed* our homage at the great *altar* of Britiſh empire. And to this it has been replied, that the very *refuſal* is the ſtrongeſt evidence of our veneration for the *altar* itſelf. Nay, it is contended by thoſe charged with this breach of devotion, that when in the ſhape of unconſtitutional exactions, violated rights and mutilated charters, they were called to worſhip *idols*, inſtead of the true *divinity*, it was in a tranſport of holy jealouſy, that they daſhed them to pieces, or whelm'd them to the bottom of the ocean.

This is, in brief, the ſtate of the argument on each ſide. And hence, at this dreadful moment, ancient friends and brethren ſtand prepared for events of the moſt tragic nature.

HERE the weight of my ſubject almoſt overcomes me; but think not that I am going to damp that noble ardor which at this inſtant glows in every boſom preſent. Nevertheleſs, as from an early acquaintance with many of you, I know that your principles are pure, and your humanity only equal'd by your tranſcendent love of your country; I am ſure you will indulge the paſſing tear, which a preacher of the Goſpel of Love muſt now ſhed over the ſcenes that lie before us—Great and deep diſtreſs about to pervade every corner of our land! millions to be called from their peaceful labors by " the ſound of the trumpet, and the alarm of war! Garments roll'd in blood," and even Victory itſelf only yielding an occaſion to weep over friends and relatives ſlain! Theſe are melancholy proſpects; and therefore you will feel with me the difficulties I now labor under—forſaken by my text, and left to lament alone that, in the Parent-land, no PHINEHAS has prevailed; no Embaſſy * of great or good

* It is acknowledged with gratitude that many great and exalted characters have pled the cauſe of America; and, previous to all coercive meaſures, adviſed

men has been raiſed, to ſtay the ſword of deſtruction, to examine into the truth of our caſe, and ſave the effuſion of kindred blood. I am left to lament that, in this ſad inſtance, *Jewiſh* tenderneſs has put *Chriſtian* benevolence to ſhame.

"OUR Brethren, the houſe of our Fa-
" thers, even they have called a multitude
" againſt us. Had an enemy thus reproach'd
" us, then perhaps we might have borne it.
" But it was you, Men our equals, our
" guides, our acquaintance, with whom we
" took ſweet council and walked together into
" the houſe of God." Or had it been for any eſſential benefit to the Common-wealth at large, we would have laid our hands on our mouths, and bowed obedience with our uſual ſilence. But for DIGNITY and SUPREMACY! What are they when ſet in oppoſition to com-

mon

an enquiry or hearing, ſimilar to that for which *Phinehas* was appointed. What is here lamented, and will be long lamented, is that this council could not take place. If brethren could come together in ſuch a temper as this, the iſſue could not fail to be for their mutual glory and mutual happineſs.

mon utility, common juſtice, and the whole faith and ſpirit of the Conſtitution? True Dignity is to govern Freemen, not Slaves; and true Supremacy is to excel in Doing Good.

It is time, and indeed more than time, for a great and enlightened people to make *names* bend to *things*, and *ideal honor* to *practical ſafety?* Precedents and indefinite claims are ſurely things too nugatory to convulſe a mighty empire. Is there no wiſdom, no great and liberal plan of policy to re-unite its members, as the ſole bulwark of liberty and proteſtantiſm; rather than by their deadly ſtrife to encreaſe the importance of thoſe ſtates that are foes to freedom, truth and humanity? To deviſe ſuch a plan; and to behold Britiſh Colonies ſpreading over this immenſe Continent, rejoicing in the common rights of Freemen, and imitating the Parent State in every excellence---is more glory than to hold lawleſs dominion over all the nations on the face of the earth!

But I will weary you no longer with fruitleſs lamentations concerning things that *might be* done. The queſtion now is—ſince they are not done, muſt we tamely ſurrender any part

of our birthright, or of that great charter of privileges, which we not only claim by inheritance, but by the expreſs terms of our colonization? I ſay, *God forbid!* For here, in particular, I wiſh to ſpeak ſo plain that neither my own principles, nor thoſe of the church to which I belong, may be miſunderſtood.

ALTHOUGH, in the beginning of this great conteſt, we thought it not our duty to be forward in widening the breach, or ſpreading diſcontent; although it be our fervent deſire to heal the wounds of the public, and to ſhew by our temper that we ſeek not to diſtreſs, but to give the parent ſtate an opportunity of ſaving themſelves and ſaving us before it be too late; nevertheleſs, as we know that our civil and religious rights are linked together in one indiſſoluble bond, we neither have, nor ſeek to have, any intereſt ſeparate from that of our country; nor can we adviſe a deſertion of its cauſe. Religion and liberty muſt flouriſh or fall together in America. We pray that both may be perpetual.

A CONTINUED ſubmiſſion to violence is no tenet of our church. When her brighteſt luminaries, near a century paſt, were called to propagate the court doctrine of a

diſpenſing

diſpenſing Power above Law—did they treacherouſly cry—"*Peace, Peace,*" when there was no *Peace!* Did they not magnanimouſly ſet their foot upon the line of the conſtitution, and tell Majeſty to its face that "they could not betray the public liberty," and that the Monarch's only ſafety conſiſted "in governing according to the laws?" Did not their example, and conſequent ſufferings, kindle a flame that illuminated the land, and introduced that noble ſyſtem of public and perſonal liberty, ſecured by the revolution? Since that period, have not the avowed principles of our greateſt divines been againſt raiſing the *Church* above the *State*; jealous of the national rights, reſolute for the *proteſtant* ſucceſſion, favourable to the *reformed* religion, and deſirous to maintain the faith of *Toleration?* If exceptions have happened, let no ſociety of chriſtians ſtand anſwerable for the deviations, or corruptions, of individuals.

THE doctrine of abſolute NON-RESISTANCE has been fully exploded among every virtuous people. The free-born ſoul revolts againſt it, and muſt have been long debaſed, and have drank in the laſt dregs of corruption, before it can brook the idea "that a whole "people

" people injured may, in no caſe, recogniſe " their trampled Majeſty." But to draw the line and ſay where ſubmiſſion ends and reſiſtance begins, is not the province of the miniſters of Chriſt, who has given no * rule in this matter, but left it to the feelings and conſciences of the injured. For when preſſures and ſufferings come, when the weight of power grows intolerable, a people will fly to the conſtitution for ſhelter, and, if able, will reſume

* The author, in a ſermon firſt publiſhed 20 years ago, on 1. Peter ii, 17. delivered his ſentiments fully on this point—in the following words, viz.—" It would be abſurd to argue as ſome have done, that the apoſtle here meant to enjoin a *continued ſubmiſſion* to violence—The love of mankind, and the fear of God, thoſe very principles from which we trace the divine original of juſt government, will lead us, by all probable means, to reſiſt every attempt to enſlave the free-born ſoul, and oppoſe the righteous will of God by defeating the happineſs of men. Reſiſtance, however, is to be a laſt reſource, and none but the majority of a whole people, can determine in what caſes it is neceſſary. In the Scriptures, therefore, obedience is rightly inculcated in general terms. For a people may ſometimes imagine grievances they do not feel, but will never miſs to feel and complain of them where they really are, unleſs their minds have been gradually prepared for ſlavery by abſurd tenets."

ſume that power which they never ſurrender-ed, except ſo far as it might be exerciſed for the common ſafety. Pulpit-caſuiſtry is too feeble to direct or controul here. God, in his own government of the world, never violates freedom; and his ſcriptures themſelves would be diſregarded, or conſidered as perverted, if brought to belie his voice, ſpeaking in the hearts of men.

THE application of theſe principles, my brethren, is now eaſy and muſt be left to your own conſciences and feelings. You are now engaged in one of the grandeſt ſtruggles, to which freemen can be called. You are contending for what you conceive to be your conſtitutional rights, and for a final ſettlement of the terms upon which this country may be perpetually united to the Parent State.

LOOK back, therefore, with reverence look back, to the times of ancient virtue and renown. Look back to the mighty purpoſes which your fathers had in view, when they traverſed a vaſt ocean, and planted this land. Recall to your minds their labors, their toils, their perſeverance, and let their divine ſpirit animate you in all your actions.

LOOK

Look forward alſo to diſtant poſterity. Figure to yourſelves millions and millions to ſpring from your loins, who may be born *freemen* or *ſlaves*, as Heaven ſhall now approve or reject your councils. Think that on you it may depend, whether this great country, in ages hence, ſhall be filled and adorned with a virtuous and enlightened people; enjoying LIBERTY and all its concomitant bleſſings, together with the RELIGION of JESUS, as it flows uncorrupted from his holy Oracles; or covered with a race of men more contemptible than the ſavages that roam the wilderneſs, becauſe they once knew the "things which belonged to their happineſs "and peace, but ſuffered them to be hid "from their eyes."

AND while you thus look *back* to the *paſt*, and *forward* to the future, fail not, I beſeech you, to *look up* to "the God of Gods--the Rock of your Salvation. As the clay in the potter's hands," ſo are the nations of the earth in the hands of Him, the everlaſting JEHOVAH! He lifteth up---and he caſteth down "---He reſiſteth the proud, and giveth grace "to the humble---He will keep the feet of his "ſaints—the wicked ſhall be ſilent in dark-"neſs, and by ſtrength ſhall no man prevail."

THE

THE bright proſpects of the Goſpel; a thorough veneration of the Saviour of the world; a conſcientious obedience to his divine laws; faith in his promiſes; and the ſtedfaſt hope of immortal life through him; theſe only can ſupport a man in all times of adverſity as well as proſperity. You might more eaſily "ſtrike fire out of ice," than ſtability or magnanimity out of crimes. But the good man, he who is at peace with the God of all peace, will know no fear but that of offending him, whoſe hand can cover the righteous "ſo "that he needs not fear the arrow that fleeth "by day, nor the deſtruction that waſteth at "noon-day; for a thouſand ſhall fall beſide "him, and ten thouſand at his right hand, "but it ſhall not come nigh to him; for he "ſhall give his angels charge over him to "keep him in all his ways."

ON the omnipotent God, therefore, thro' his bleſſed Son, let your ſtrong confidence be placed; but do not vainly expect that every day will be to you a day of proſperity or triumph. The ways of providence lie through mazes, too intricate for human penetration. Mercies may often be held forth to us in the

ſhape of ſufferings; and the viciſſitudes of our fortune in building up this American fabric of happineſs and glory may be various and chequer'd.

But let not this diſcourage you. Yea rather let it animate you with a holy *fervor*---a divine *enthuſiaſm*---ever perſuading yourſelves that the cauſe of *virtue* and *Freedom* is the Cause of God upon earth; and that the whole theatre of human nature does not exhibit a more auguſt ſpectacle than a number of Freemen, in dependence upon Heaven, mutually binding themſelves to encounter every difficulty and danger in ſupport of their native and conſtitutional rights, and for tranſmitting them holy and unviolated totheir poſterity.

It was this principle that inſpired the heroes of ancient times; that raiſed their names to the ſummit of renown, and filled all ſucceeding ages with their unſpotted praiſe. It is this principle too that muſt animate your conduct, if you wiſh your names to reach future generations, conſpicuous in the roll of glory;

glory; and ſo far as this principle leads you, be prepared to follow---whether to life or to death.

WHILE you profeſs yourſelves contending for Liberty, let it be with the temper and dignity of freemen, undaunted and firm, but without wrath or vengeance, ſo far as grace may be obtained to aſſiſt the weakneſs of nature. Conſider it as a happy circumſtance, if ſuch a ſtruggle muſt have happened, that God hath been pleaſed to poſtpone it to a period, when our country is adorned with men of enlightened zeal; when the arts and ſciences are planted among us to ſecure a ſucceſſion of ſuch men; when our morals are not far tainted by luxury, profuſion or diſſipation; when the principles that withſtood oppreſſion, in the brighteſt æra of the Engliſh hiſtory, are ours as it were by peculiar inheritance; and when we ſtand upon our own ground, with all that is dear around us, animating us to every patriotic exertion. Under ſuch circumſtances and upon ſuch principles, what wonders, what atchievements of true glory, have not been performed!

For my part, I have long been poſſeſſed with a ſtrong and even enthuſiaſtic perſuaſion, that Heaven has great and gracious purpoſes towards this continent, which no human power or human device ſhall be able finally to fruſtrate. Illiberal or miſtaken plans of policy may diſtreſs us for a while, and perhaps ſorely check our growth; but if we maintain our own virtue; if we cultivate the ſpirit of Liberty among our children; if we guard againſt the ſnares of luxury, venality and corruption; the Genius of America will ſtill riſe triumphant, and that with a power at laſt too mighty for oppoſition. This country *will be free*—nay, for ages to come, a choſen ſeat of *Freedom*, *Arts*, and *heavenly Knowlege*; which are now either drooping or dead in moſt countries of the old world.

To conclude, ſince the *ſtrength* of all public bodies, under God, conſiſts in their Union; bear with each other's infirmities, and even varieties of ſentiments, in things not eſſential to the main point. The tempers of men

men are cast in various moulds. Some are quick and *feelingly alive* in all their mental operations, especially those which relate to their country's weal, and are therefore ready to burst forth into flame upon every alarm. Others again, with intentions alike pure, and a clear unquenchable love of their country, too stedfast to be damped by the mists of prejudice, or worked up into conflagration by the rude blasts of passion, think it their duty to weigh consequences, and to deliberate fully upon the probable means of obtaining public ends. Both these kinds of men should bear with each other; for both are friends to their country.

One thing further let me add, that without *order* and just *subordination*, their can be no *union* in public bodies. However much you may be equals on other occasions, yet all this must cease in an united and associated capacity; and every individual is bound to keep the place and duty assigned him, by ties far more powerful over a man of virtue and honour, than all the other ties which human policy can contrive. It had been better never

to

to have lifted a voice in your country's cauſe, than to betray it by want of *Union*; or to leave worthy men, who have embarked their all for the common good, to ſuffer, or ſtand unaſſiſted.

LASTLY, by every method in your power, and in every poſſible caſe, ſupport the LAWS of your country. In a conteſt for liberty, think what a crime it would be, to ſuffer one *Freeman* to be inſulted or wantonly injured in his liberty, ſo far as by your means it may be prevented.

THUS animated and thus acting—We may then SING with the prophet—

"FEAR not, O land! be glad and re-
"joice, for the Lord will do great things.
"Be not afraid, ye beaſts of the field, for
"the paſtures of the wilderneſs do ſpring—
"The tree beareth her fruit—the fig-tree and
"the vine yield their fruit."

THUS animated and thus acting—we may likewiſe PRAY with the prophet—

"O

"O LORD be gracious unto us—we have
" waited for thee. Be thou our arm every
" morning, our ſalvation alſo in time of trou-
" ble. Some truſt in chariots and ſome in
" horſes, but we will remember the name
" of the Lord our God—O thou hope of
" Iſrael, the Saviour thereof in time of need
" —thou art in the midſt of us and we are
" called by thy name—LEAVE US NOT.
" Give us *one* heart and *one* way, that we
" may fear thee for ever, for the good of
" ourſelves and our children after us—We
" looked for peace, but no good came; and
" for a time of health, but behold we are in
" trouble—Yet will we truſt in the Lord for
" ever; for in the Lord Jehovah is everlaſt-
" ing ſtrength—He will yet bind up the
" broken-hearted, and comfort thoſe that
" mourn"—even ſo, oh our God do thou
comfort and relieve them, that ſo the bones
which thou haſt broken may yet rejoice. In-
ſpire us with a high and commanding ſenſe of
the value of our conſtitutional rights! may a
ſpirit of wiſdom and virtue be poured down
upon

upon us all; and may our Repreſentatives, thoſe who are delegated to *deviſe* and appointed to *execute* public meaſures, be directed to ſuch, as thou in thy ſovereign goodneſs ſhalt be pleaſed to render effectual for the ſalvation of a great empire, and re-uniting all its members in one ſacred bond of harmony and public happineſs! Grant this, oh Father, for thy Son Jeſus Chriſt's ſake; to whom, with thee and the holy Spirit, one God, be Glory, Honour and Power now and forever! AMEN.

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